

Executive Registry

88-3130X

T H E W H I T E H O U S E O F F I C E

REFERRAL

AUGUST 9, 1988

TO: CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
ATTN: JOHN HELGERSON

OCA FILE WJH

ACTION REQUESTED:
APPROPRIATE ACTION

REMARKS: ALSO REFERRED TO DOS AND NSC AND DOD

DESCRIPTION OF INCOMING:

ID: 586822

MEDIA: LETTER, DATED JULY 28, 1988

TO: PRESIDENT REAGAN

FROM: THE HONORABLE WALLY HERGER
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

WASHINGTON DC 20515

SUBJECT: SUGGESTS THAT PRESIDENTIAL INTERVENTION IS
REQUIRED TO SAVE THE SR-71 STRATEGIC
RECONNAISSANCE PROGRAM

PROMPT ACTION IS ESSENTIAL -- IF REQUIRED ACTION HAS NOT BEEN
TAKEN WITHIN 9 WORKING DAYS OF RECEIPT, PLEASE TELEPHONE THE
UNDERSIGNED AT 456-7486.

RETURN CORRESPONDENCE, WORKSHEET AND COPY OF RESPONSE
(OR DRAFT) TO:
AGENCY LIAISON, ROOM 91, THE WHITE HOUSE, 20500

SALLY KELLEY
DIRECTOR OF AGENCY LIAISON
PRESIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENCE

DCI
EXEC
REG

THE WHITE HOUSE
CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

INCOMING

ND0001

DATE RECEIVED: AUGUST 01, 1988

NAME OF CORRESPONDENT: THE HONORABLE WALLY HERGER

SUBJECT: SUGGESTS THAT PRESIDENTIAL INTERVENTION IS
REQUIRED TO SAVE THE SR-71 STRATEGIC
RECONNAISSANCE PROGRAM

| ROUTE TO: OFFICE/AGENCY . (STAFF NAME) | ACTION | | DISPOSITION | |
|---|-------------|------------------|--------------|---------------------------|
| | ACT CODE | DATE YY/MM/DD | TYPE RESP | C COMPLETED D YY/MM/DD |
| ALAN KRANOWITZ | ORG | 88/08/01 | OK | 188/8/14 TR |
| 99 DOS: Ed Fok REFERRAL NOTE: | A | 88/08/08 | TR | 1/1 |
| 99 DOD: Joni Stevens REFERRAL NOTE: | A | 88/08/08 | TR | 1/1 |
| 99 CIA: John Anderson REFERRAL NOTE: | A | 88/08/08 | TR | 1/1 |
| NSC Sec. NSSTEV REFERRAL NOTE: | A | 88/08/08 | TR | 1/1 |

COMMENTS: CONGRESSMAN BOB STUMP SIGNED TWICE

ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENTS: 38 MEDIA:L INDIVIDUAL CODES: 1230 1240 _____
MAIL USER CODES: (A) _____ (B) _____ (C) _____

| | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---|
| *ACTION CODES: | *DISPOSITION | *OUTGOING | * |
| * | * | *CORRESPONDENCE: | * |
| *A-APPROPRIATE ACTION | *A-ANSWERED | *TYPE RESP=INITIALS | * |
| *C-COMMENT/RECOM | *B-NON-SPEC-REFERRAL | *OF SIGNER | * |
| *D-DRAFT RESPONSE | *C-COMPLETED | *CODE = A | * |
| *F-FURNISH FACT SHEET | *S-SUSPENDED | *COMPLETED = DATE OF | * |
| *I-INFO COPY/NO ACT NEC* | | *OUTGOING | * |
| *R-DIRECT REPLY W/COPY * | | | * |
| *S-FOR-SIGNATURE * | | | * |
| *X-INTERIM REPLY * | | | * |

REFER QUESTIONS AND ROUTING UPDATES TO CENTRAL REFERENCE
(ROOM 75, OEOB) EXT-2590
KEEP THIS WORKSHEET ATTACHED TO THE ORIGINAL INCOMING
LETTER AT ALL TIMES AND SEND COMPLETED RECORD TO RECORDS
MANAGEMENT.

August 4, 1988

Dear Wally:

Thank you for your July 28 letter to the President, cosigned by 38 of your colleagues, in support of the SR-71 strategic reconnaissance program.

We appreciate your interest in writing and affording us the opportunity to review your comments in this regard. On your behalf, I have shared your correspondence with appropriate Administration officials and have asked that they provide you with a follow-up response in the near future.

With best wishes,

Cordially,

Alan M. Kranowitz
Assistant to the President

The Honorable Wally Herger
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
AMK/KRJ/RJ/pt (8AMKG)
SR-71/H

cc: w/copy of inc to NSC Secretariat - for coordination of response.
cc: w/copy of inc. to Ed Fox, cong affairs, STATE - for coordinated response.
cc: w/copy of inc. to Joni Stevens - for DoD coordinated response.
cc: w/copy of inc. to John Helgersen, cong. affairs, CIA - for coordinated response.

WALLY HERGER
2d DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

July 28, 1988

The Honorable Ronald Reagan
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

AK
You have been a strong supporter of the SR-71 strategic reconnaissance program for several years. The two letters that you wrote in support of the program during the 1987 fiscal year helped to gain Congressional approval of needed improvements and upgrades to the platform. As a result, the SR-71 remains not only the fastest and highest flying aircraft in the world, but an invaluable tool for our intelligence community.

For these reasons, both Secretary of State George Shultz and Director of the Central Intelligence Agency William Webster have written letters within the past two months to Secretary Carlucci to express their dismay over Department of Defense plans to eliminate the program by the end of the 1989 fiscal year. Furthermore, in a recent classified briefing to Congress, the Air Force emphatically defended the program and re-emphasized its importance in light of recent events in the Middle East and elsewhere.

The SR-71 is uniquely qualified to meet these and other assignments. It provides high-quality, wide area synoptic coverage using a variety of sensors, including radar, photo, and ELINT. Its ability to alter its flight-path or return for a second or third pass over the same area, as well as its proficiency in acquiring data in inclement weather or on short notice all constitute significant advantages over overhead systems. As Secretary of State Shultz pointed out in his letter, "... the SR-71 generally complements (rather than duplicates) satellite coverage."

Additionally, as the Pentagon itself has pointed out on a number of occasions, our satellite force is becoming increasingly vulnerable to Soviet threats, including both conventional and advanced anti-satellite measures. An active SR-71 program guards against the day that a part or all of our overhead imagery might not be fully operable.

The Honorable Ronald Reagan
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Given this information, we find it difficult to understand the rationale behind the D.O.D.'s decision to eliminate the program. While we certainly sympathize with the severe budgetary constraints that have been imposed by the recent budget-summit agreement, we do not believe that the SR-71 can be sacrificed until an effective replacement is designed. If the current budget environment remains unchanged, it is doubtful that we could afford a follow-on to the aircraft. Intelligence experts inform us that even given a more favorable budget situation, such a system is at least several years from completion. We also believe it is important to recognize that shutting down the SR-71 program could cost between \$1 billion and \$2 billion, equal to the cost of running the program at current levels for five to ten years. This does not include the approximately \$3.8 billion that we have invested in equipment currently used by the program, including supplies in the warehouse, sensors, test equipment, and the aircraft themselves. (Another \$5.4 billion is invested in equipment that is not in use at this time).

Furthermore, not only has the cost of the program been reduced by 50% during the past two-years, but we believe that the value of the program can not be measured solely in terms of dollar amounts. To shelve the SR-71 would be to severely degrade our critical intelligence capabilities. National security dictates that the program be retained.

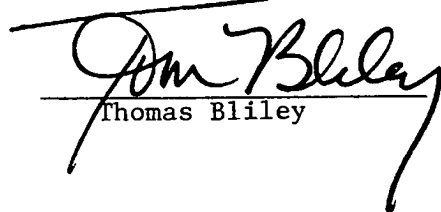
If the program is to be saved at this time, we believe that Presidential intervention will be required. We would hope that you would personally review the pertinent data, and support the position taken by Mr. Shultz and Judge Webster backing the program. We appreciate your time and effort in this matter.

Sincerely,

✓ 
Wally Herger

✓ 
Bob McEwen

✓ 
Dave McCurdy

✓ 
Thomas Bliley

The Honorable, Ronald Reagan
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✓ BST
Bob Stump

✓ Elton Gallegly
Elton Gallegly

✓ Rick Boucher
Rick Boucher

✓ Bob Dornan
Robert Dornan

✓ Buddy Darden
George "Buddy" Darden

✓ Edward J. Markey
Edward J. Markey

✓ Carlos Moorhead
Carlos Moorhead

✓ George E. Brown Jr.
George E. Brown

✓ Robert T. Matsui
Robert T. Matsui

✓ Robert Badham
Robert Badham

✓ Buz Lukens
Donald "Buz" Lukens

✓ David Dreier
David Dreier

✓ Jerry Lewis
Jerry Lewis

✓ Mike Bilirakis
Michael Bilirakis

✓ John Paul Hammerschmidt
John Paul Hammerschmidt

✓ Charles Wilson
Charles Wilson

✓ Robert A. Roe
Robert A. Roe

✓ Gerald Solomon
Gerald Solomon

✓ James Courter
James Courter

✓ Beverly Byron
Beverly Byron

The Honorable Ronald Reagan

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✓ Bill Thomas

Bill Thomas

✓ Clyde C. Holloway

Clyde C. Holloway

✓ Robert Walker

Robert Walker

✓ Richard Arney

Richard Arney

✓ Stan Parris

Stan Parris

✓ W.G. "Bill" Hefner

W.G. "Bill" Hefner

✓ Jack Kemp

Jack Kemp

✓ Dan Coats

Dan Coats

✓ Mervyn M. Dymally

Mervyn M. Dymally

Vic Fazio

✓ Bill Dannemeyer

Bill Dannemeyer

✓ Robert C. Smith

Robert C. Smith

✓ Norman D. Shumway

Norman D. Shumway

✓ Bob Stump Duplicate

Bob Stump

✓ Andy Ireland

Andy Ireland

✓ Robert Davis

Robert Davis